



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
20 October 2000

Original: English

Third Committee

Summary record of the 9th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 October 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Gittens-Joseph (Trinidad and Tobago)

Contents

Agenda item 105: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*)*

Agenda item 106: International drug control (*continued*)*

Other matters

* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.



The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 105: Crime prevention and criminal justice (continued) (A/55/119, A/55/156, A/55/162-S/2000/715, A/55/257-S/2000/766, A/C.3/55/L.3, L.4 and L.5)

Agenda item 106: International drug control (continued) (A/55/126, A/55/375, A/55/68-S/2000/377, A/55/133-S/2000/682, A/55/257-S/2000/766, A/55/260-S/2000/108, A/55/326-S/2000/834)

1. **Mr. Al-Qahtani** (United Arab Emirates) said that it was essential for the international community to address the economic, social and human ills caused by drug trafficking and crime. To that end, his country had introduced deterrent laws and punishments which were based on Islam and which had reduced both problems. In addition, it had recruited qualified customs officers who received ongoing training in the detection of new drug trafficking methods and had the very latest equipment. Moreover, it had established a rehabilitation centre for drug addicts and had created summer programmes and activities in order to occupy young persons, some of whom were also recruited during the summer by government agencies in return for a decent wage. Furthermore, focus was placed on awareness-raising through the various media and a local strategy was employed that was based on the comprehensive plan drawn up by international and regional organizations, as well as on the Arab strategy formulated in conjunction with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). Lastly, he confirmed that his country was looking forward to attending the High-level Political Signing Conference to be held in Palermo for the purpose of signing the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto.

2. **Ms. Mocaroni** (San Marino) said that the problems of drug addiction and rehabilitation of addicts must be tackled on all fronts. Initiatives by local communities should be encouraged and helped by Governments and international organizations. The Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly (S-20/2, annex) offered guidance in that respect.

3. San Marino had signed the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime of the Council of Europe and had ratified the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. It was ready to support common action towards the elimination of the drug problem, and in particular to fight money laundering.

4. Notwithstanding its small size, San Marino suffered harshly from the problem of drug addiction among its young people. It therefore recognized the importance of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction. It was interesting that the reasons which lay behind drug consumption, such as poverty and violence, resembled the effects of drug abuse. Her Government believed that action should be concentrated in two fields: containment of drug trafficking and consumption, on the one hand, and efforts to improve values education, starting with families and schools, on the other.

5. The toughest obstacle to international drug control was the control of production, since that involved one of the world's biggest plagues, poverty. There was a clear link between poverty and the increase in drug production and drug trafficking. The only solution was to provide poor countries with possibilities for achieving better living standards without having to carry on illegal activities; debt cancellation was a first step in that direction.

6. **Mr. Donoso** (Chile) said that one of the major contributions of the Political Declaration was the concept of a world drug problem, closing the previously unbridgeable divide in the perception of the problem between producer and consumer countries.

7. Chile had constantly reiterated its commitment to overcoming the world drug problem through unconditional respect for the general principles of international law laid down in the Charter, particularly full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. The solution of the world drug problem was a common challenge, requiring States to display political will and cooperate with each other.

8. The distinctive feature of the world drug problem was its transnational nature: drugs crossed political, legal and even ideological borders. Its participants formed a network which was often beyond the reach of the traditional prosecuting mechanisms of the State or States; at the global level, therefore, the State had a comparative disadvantage in dealing with the problem. State institutions, whether alone or in cooperation with other States, lacked the instruments, mechanisms, versatility and speed needed to counteract the world drug problem, especially in respect of related crimes. An imaginative set of measures to deal with the problem at the transnational level was therefore required. At the same time, the State and its institutions were responsible to its citizens for the prevention and eradication of the problem, and the State needed to make up for its comparative disadvantage, particularly through international cooperation.

9. The concept of human security emanating from the Lysen Declaration constituted an innovative and promising approach to a highly complex issue. Protection of the individual, especially children and young people, which involved not merely the absence of real or potential threats to their integrity but also a climate of support for the development of their potential, should move to the centre of efforts to overcome that problem and other major problems facing countries.

10. The most effective way to overcome the world drug problem was through international cooperation at all levels — global, within UNDCP, and in other regional and bilateral bodies, such as the Organization of American States and the European Union.

11. **Mr. Boisson** (Monaco) said that the work of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention in strengthening the coordination and development of operational activities, particularly in combating organized crime, should be reflected in appropriate allocations from the regular budget. The approval of the draft Convention against Transnational Organized Crime reflected the sense of urgency of the international community with regard to acquiring the legal, technical and human means to confront the danger posed to democracies by criminal organizations.

12. Since 1993, Monaco had been developing appropriate legislation to combat money-laundering, which was similar to the legislation adopted in the main developed States and in some cases went further,

particularly with regard to funds of criminal origin and persons who were required to make declarations. Monaco, which was a member of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), was fully aware of the need to adapt constantly to the requirements of the modern world, which could necessitate a further strengthening of its legislative and regulatory structure.

13. Monaco had taken a number of specific steps. It was doubling the size of the staff of its service for information about and monitoring of clandestine financial circuits; developing bilateral cooperation with other countries to combat money laundering, for which purpose it had established contacts with bodies in Europe and the United States; and preparing to accede to the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime of the Council of Europe.

14. The Monegasque association of banks was fully aware of the responsibilities of financial institutions. The Monegasque authorities therefore rejected the idea that Monaco was a murky financial area; access to information and cooperation were the cornerstones of the services provided by banks which, within the limited time available, had to decide whether to block a financial transaction. Trust and mutual respect among the various partners at the national and international levels were essential in that respect.

15. Monaco welcomed the work of the Centre for International Crime Prevention; its research would no doubt confirm the great adaptability of criminal organizations, which could take advantage of the slightest weakness in State or international structures, aided by the development of information technologies.

16. His delegation supported the draft resolution concerning the elaboration of an effective international legal instrument against corruption. While criminal organizations disregarded national borders, it was often within States themselves that corruption took root, undermining development cooperation and assistance efforts. The international community could not continue to denounce that scourge without acquiring the means to combat it.

17. **Ms. Mesdoua** (Algeria) said that, in an era of globalization and interdependence, the international community must mobilize all its resources to end the scourge of drug trafficking. The declarations and action plans adopted at the twentieth special session of the

General Assembly, based on the principles of shared responsibility and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, constituted the appropriate framework for strengthening international cooperation to eliminate drug trafficking, demand and production.

18. Her delegation was pleased to learn of the incorporation of those commitments into national plans, the implementation of programmes to eradicate illicit drug crops and increased international cooperation in enforcement. It was concerned, however, about the establishment in some of the developed countries of drug injection rooms, which encouraged drug abuse and drug trafficking.

19. In Africa, drug abuse and drug trafficking were increasingly linked with armed conflict and with poverty. The poverty generated by economic and social upheavals and the negative effects of structural adjustment measures had driven many, young people in particular, to turn to drugs as a source of income or as an escape from a lack of employment and prospects.

20. The third African meeting of experts on drugs, held in Algiers in February 2000, had culminated in recommendations on both demand reduction and law enforcement. The experts had recommended a common intergovernmental plan of action for Organization of African Unity (OAU) member States, to be based on the creation of a data bank and including awareness-raising campaigns, personnel training, school drug prevention programmes, and shelters and treatment for addicts. The experts had also recommended that all OAU member States should ratify the United Nations Conventions of 1961 and 1971 and should develop judicial cooperation programmes. They had called for a greater exchange of information among the African countries, better coordination of drug control policy, the creation of a mechanism to combat money-laundering and elaboration of a common list for the dispensing of psychotropic substances. Her delegation hoped that UNDCP would fully support the OAU plan of action and would be allocated adequate resources to carry out its responsibilities.

21. Her delegation supported the adoption of the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime as a first step in combating international crime and hoped that the three additional international legal instruments in preparation would also be ready for adoption at the current Assembly session.

22. The Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century, adopted at the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, had been a major step forward. Algeria particularly welcomed paragraphs 19 and 20 of the Declaration, which embodied the commitment to take effective, resolute and speedy action to prevent and combat terrorism and the commitment to incorporate into international crime prevention strategies and norms measures to prevent and combat crime associated with racism and xenophobia. Implementation of the Vienna Declaration would require a coherent and practical plan, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which had a key role to play in follow-up and implementation, should address the question at its tenth session.

23. Although Algeria was not a large producer or consumer of drugs, it had become a major transit country. The Government had taken steps to combat the problem, among other things by setting up a national commission on drug addiction, creating a national office on drug control and drug addiction and devising a national master plan, which it had been implementing in cooperation with UNDCP.

24. Cognizant of the destabilizing effects of corruption on fragile economies, Algeria had been urging the international community to elaborate an international instrument against all aspects of corruption, separate from the convention on transnational crime, and was pleased to see that the idea was taking root. Her delegation advocated the establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental committee to consider and negotiate the text of the convention.

25. **Mr. Ka** (Senegal) said that his delegation was encouraged by the results of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice adopted at the Congress constituted a voluntary framework reflecting the renewed commitment of States to combat organized crime.

26. It also welcomed the progress achieved by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in elaborating the draft convention and the three additional international legal instruments on illicit manufacturing

of and trafficking in firearms, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.

27. In addition, the international community needed to deal more vigorously with the problem of money-laundering and to speed up the process of elaborating an international instrument against corruption. In addition to efforts to suppress corruption, emphasis should be placed on prevention through improved administrative institutions, good governance, effective law enforcement, education and awareness-raising.

28. Africa had seen an alarming growth in crime, often associated with armed conflicts and illicit trafficking in drugs and small arms. He hoped that the crime prevention project for Senegal, already developed and submitted to donors, would soon become operational. At the regional level, his delegation would like to see the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders provided with sufficient human, financial and technical resources to fulfil its mandate.

29. His delegation was encouraged by the efforts of Member States to implement the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, especially the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction. It was in that area in particular that priority attention should be accorded to youth, a focus that should be incorporated into the development and execution of information, education and awareness-raising programmes. In that regard, his delegation welcomed and encouraged collaboration among UNDCP, UNICEF, Governments and non-governmental organizations to address the needs of adolescents in crisis and street children. The Government of Senegal was devoting considerable effort to information campaigns in that regard in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, the media and civil society.

30. Senegal was also reinforcing border controls, which had resulted recently in large drug seizures. It was putting into operation its national plan to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking, which entailed efforts to build national anti-drug capacity, intensify preventive campaigns directed primarily towards youth, treat drug addicts and strengthen enforcement. Senegal already had a drug code and had ratified all the United Nations drug control conventions. Its initiatives were in line with the plans of action adopted by OAU

in 1996 and by the Economic Community of West Africa in 1997.

31. Clearly, in addition to good legislation and good plans, considerable resources would be required to eradicate the problem of drugs throughout the world. National and regional efforts would need to be supported by international cooperation, and the capacity of UNDCP to act should be enhanced.

32. **Mr. Darwish** (Egypt) said the world drug problem warranted the full attention of the international community with a view to preserving the health of young persons and the future of society. Having reaffirmed Egypt's support for UNDCP, he said that it had taken measures to combat illicit drug consumption and trafficking. Moreover, as well as strengthening its efforts to combat money-laundering and drug cultivation, it was endeavouring to formulate a comprehensive national strategy for drug demand reduction and to counter the adverse social effects of drug abuse, with particular focus on the treatment of drug addicts and the provision of help to the families of convicted drug offenders.

33. However, most developing countries had neither the resources nor the capabilities needed to wage an effective war against drugs, as they were primarily engaged in addressing other economic, developmental and social issues. It was therefore vital to strengthen international cooperation and the role of the United Nations and its regional offices in supporting both governmental and non-governmental efforts aimed at combating drugs, particularly in the field of information exchange and in the provision of funding and technical assistance.

34. With regard to crime prevention and criminal justice, he welcomed the High-level Political Signing Conference to be held in Palermo for the purpose of signing the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto. Egypt attached special importance to crime prevention by means of its general policy aimed at achieving maximum political stability and social peace in every sector of society. In accordance with the preamble to its Constitution, the sovereignty of the law was an essential guarantee of individual freedom and the sole basis for the legitimacy of authority, as well as the basis of government. Furthermore, peace could not be established without justice.

35. In accordance with the Constitution, the law and social values, Egypt's government agencies endeavoured to apply the principle of "security for society without distinction" and the rules of criminal justice and to comply fully with the due process of law. An accused person was therefore considered to be innocent until proved guilty in a criminal trial that guaranteed his self-defence.

36. At both local and international levels, Egypt had taken earnest steps to prevent crime and establish social justice through its legislative, executive and judicial authorities by developing and updating its laws and devising appropriate punishment regimes. Through the agencies concerned, it was also taking steps to ascertain the fairness of trials at every stage, ensure respect for the rights of the accused and devise a system of rehabilitation for convicted offenders on an equal opportunity basis. In addition, prisons were strictly supervised to ensure that prisoners were well treated.

37. Lastly, in view of the importance of strengthening regional crime prevention capabilities, the international community should provide the financial and technical assistance needed to enable the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders to play its role as a United Nations coordinating centre in the African continent.

38. **Ms. Li Sangu** (China) said that the spread of organized crime worldwide was undermining the political stability and economic and social development of some States. Her delegation welcomed the impetus given to international cooperation in combating crime by the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Her delegation urged Member States to implement the strategy and guidelines formulated at the Congress; to give more attention and support to the elaboration of the three protocols to the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; and to enhance the central and coordinating role of the United Nations in combating transnational organized crime. More resources should be allocated to these efforts and made available to developing countries to face the threats posed by organized transnational criminal activities.

39. China attached great importance to the United Nations activities relating to crime prevention and criminal justice and had taken an active part in the formulation of the draft convention and protocols. China had tried, especially in recent years, to cooperate

in international efforts to combat transnational organized crime. It had signed bilateral agreements on mutual assistance in judicial matters with over 40 countries. Chinese law enforcement had collaborated with counterparts abroad, with notable results.

40. At the national level, the Government of China was vigorously pursuing crime rings through special task forces. The country's Penal Code had been adapted to draw on international experience in controlling transnational crime.

41. Her delegation believed that enhanced international cooperation based on the principles of respect for State sovereignty, equality and mutual benefits and in keeping with General Assembly resolutions would lead to more fruitful results in the fight against organized crime.

42. **Mr. Karev** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation welcomed the outcome of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and the ninth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as the unanimous approval of the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. It was essential, however, that mechanisms should be established for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention at the national and international levels.

43. Combating corruption of all kinds was an integral part of the fight against organized crime and clearly required effective international cooperation. It was essential to have a legal base, and his delegation fully supported the draft resolution regarding an effective international legal instrument against corruption.

44. One of the most effective means of combating organized crime was to undermine its economic foundations, especially money-laundering and the illicit export of capital. That issue was particularly acute for the Russian Federation, and it had adopted a whole range of measures in that sphere. New legislation to combat money-laundering, which took into account existing international standards, was being finalized. The Russian Federation had signed the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime of the Council of Europe and would ratify it in the near future. It was very interested in cooperating with other countries to work out practical methods for joint search and confiscation of criminal proceeds.

45. Universal cooperation in crime control must be supported by adequate measures at the regional level. His Government's main priority was crime control cooperation within the Commonwealth of Independent States, on the basis of the inter-State programme of joint measures to combat crime over the period 2000-2003, adopted in June 2000 by the Council of Heads of State. The data bank for countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and assessment of organized crime in the Russian Federation, which was being developed jointly with the Centre for International Crime Prevention, was also of great importance, and should provide essential assistance to the competent services in collecting and analysing information on transnational criminal groups.

46. Illicit drug trafficking was a no less serious problem. In 2000, more than 20 tons of drugs had been confiscated and over 600 clandestine laboratories closed down in the Russian Federation. On the basis of its own experience, his Government could affirm that the curbing of the drug threat could not be accomplished by any individual State.

47. His delegation welcomed the work of the forty-third session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs and shared its concern about the rapid increase in the manufacture and consumption of synthetic drugs and, in particular, amphetamine-type stimulants. An important element of the international strategy should be a balanced approach to the problem of precursors that would combine control measures and protection of lawful trade in those substances.

48. His Government reaffirmed its unwavering position on the inadmissibility of attempts to legalize some narcotic substances or remove them from State control under the pretext of dividing them into soft and hard drugs.

49. His Government was particularly concerned about the increased production and export of drugs from Afghanistan, which was destabilizing the whole situation in the Central Asian region. Unless the necessary measures were adopted, it was inevitable that Afghan drug exports would reach the black markets of the Russian Federation, Western Europe and North America. His Government welcomed the work of UNDCP and the countries of the "6+2" Group to create a security zone around Afghanistan. The recent adoption of the regional action plan was a significant achievement in that direction. The Russian Federation was doing its part and, in particular, was ready to

continue its cooperation in the air-space monitoring of illicit drug crops.

50. His delegation supported the view that, since UNDCP carried out large-scale projects in the area of drug control, it should be allocated sufficient resources from the United Nations regular budget, particularly in view of the new tasks that it would be performing under the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction.

Other matters

51. **Ms. Newell** (Secretary of the Committee), replying to a question raised at the previous meeting by the delegation of Uganda concerning the correct name of the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), said that that was the official title of the Institute, conferred on it by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa in its resolution 642 (XXIII) of 15 April 1988; it did not include the words "United Nations". In the area of crime prevention, the institute which officially included the words "United Nations" in its title was the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNACRI), since it had been established as a subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council in Council resolution 1989/56.

52. **Ms. Kalema** (Uganda) said that there were five regional institutes in the area of crime prevention, all with similar objectives. Some of them, at least, retained the words "United Nations" in their titles, for example, the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (ILANUD) and the United Nations Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI). It was not clear to her delegation why UNAFRI should be treated differently. Moreover, United Nations documents and resolutions and the documentation and logo of UNAFRI itself had regularly referred to the Institute as the "United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders" until the previous year, when the Secretariat had decided it should be changed. Her delegation would appreciate further clarification on this point.

53. **The Chairperson** said she took it that the Secretariat would research the matter further.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.